

Charama-vritti

The English translation “Heart of Shri Shankara” says://”The doctrine of the atmakara-vritti (or brahmakara-vritti) as the last vritti, coinciding with the death of the body, is reflected in the following passage at Madhusudana, A.S. Ed. Yogindrinanda p.1284-(N.S. Ed. p.88S)://

First and foremost, it is to be understood that AtmAkArA-vritti or BrahmAkArA-vritti or akhanDAkArA-vritti is not defined to occur only at the time of death of the body. It is not the siddhAnta that it will occur only at the time of death of the body.

In siddhAnta, chaitanya-reflected-in-akhanDAkArA-vritti is the destroyer of avidyA. However, this akhanDAkArA-vritti can be either coupled with prArabdha-rUpa-pratibandhaka or without prArabdha-rUpa-pratibandhaka.

prArabdha-rUpa-pratibandhaka-vishishTa-akhanDAkArA-vritti (**AV1**) is the general connotation of akhanDAkArA-vritti. Chaitanya-reflected-in-AV1 removes two out of three shakti of avidyA, namely shakti-which-causes-the-illusion-of-reality-in-world and shakti-which-enables-arthA-kriyA-kArItva-in-world. However, chaitanya-reflected-in-AV1 is incapable of removing the third shakti of avidyA, which is also known as avidyA-lesha and is shakti-which-gives-birth-to-objects-which-are-cable-of-appearing-as-pratyaksha.

prArabdha-rUpa-pratibandhaka-rahita-akhanDAkArA-vritti (**AV2**) is called charma-vritti. It is also akhanDAkArA-vritti. However, since there is no pratibandhaka in the form of prArabdha, the chaitanya-reflected-in-AV2 removes even the third shakti i.e. avidyA-lesha.

Thus, the very first line in HOSS makes an error. The doctrine does not say that AtmAkArA-vritti is last vritti. The charama-vritti is also an akhanDAkArA-vritti. The special thing about it is that there is no pratibandhaka in the form of prArabdha here.

//”Nor should it be said that, since there is no superiority in point of manifestation of bliss the mental modification (vrItti) that produces the highest (parama) form of liberation (at death) over

the earlier modification that produces liberation in life, it follows that the highest form of liberation is constituted, not by the pure Self, but merely by the Self as associated with the last moment of life or the last breath. For we hold that the last self-effacing mental modification is superior to the earlier one producing liberation in life in point of manifestation of bliss, because it is not affected by further mental activity (vikshepa) arising from the merit and demerit that produced the present life (prarabdha-karma), whereas the earlier modification was’.

Thus, in contrast to Samkara’s doctrine of sadyomukti or total liberation in life, the later authors tended to regard liberation in life as a mere preliminary to liberation at the death of the body, altogether inferior to it.” HOSS fn3 p201//

First and foremost, we must understand that MadhusUdana Saraswati accepts jIvanmukti as arthavAda in the main VedAnta SiddhAnta, which is drishTi-srishTi-vAda. The relevant sections of Advaita Siddhi in DrishTi-srishTi-vAda-vichArah and Eka-jIva-vAda-vichArah may be seen. I am surprised as to why such distinction is not made upfront before attributing the “later authors” with fanciful ideas.

JIvanmukti is admitted only in SDV. It is not admitted in DSV or in ajAti.

Now, I will put up the quoted portion from Advaita-siddhi in Sanskrit:

न च जीवन्मुक्तिप्रयोजकवृत्त्यपेक्षया परममुक्तिप्रयोजकवृत्तौ आनन्दाभिव्यक्तिगतविशेषाभावे चरमक्षणेन चरमश्वासेन वा उपलक्षित आत्मा मुक्तिरिति किं न स्यादिति वाच्यम् ; प्रारब्धकर्मप्रयुक्तविक्षेपाविक्षेपाभ्यामभिव्यक्तिविशेषस्याङ्गीकारात् ।

First of all, the English translation posted in the quote is itself incorrect. As we have seen before, jIvanmukti-prayojaka-vritti is AV1 and parama-mukti-prayojaka-vritti is AV2. The objection by the opponents is:

Objection: There is absence of difference in the expression of bliss in AV1 and AV2. Therefore, why liberation should not be last-moment-upalkshitA-AtmA or last-breath-upalskhita-AtmA. {The siddhAnta is not that pure self is liberation, as HOSS holds. It is rather

AV2-upalskhita-AtmA. The topic is of avidyA-nivritti which is liberation. Advaita-Siddhi holds avidyA-nivritti to be AV2-upalakshita-AtmA. HOSS incorrectly mentions “pure self”].

Answer: No. The difference in the expression of bliss in AV1 and AV2 is admitted on account of vikshepa-caused-by-prArabdha (in case of AV1) and absence-of-vikshepa-caused-by-prArabdha (in case of AV2).

Now, jIvanmukti is verily the sadyomukti of bhAshya. The “later authors” are not treating jIvanmukti as preliminary. The AvAraNa-shakti of avidyA is destroyed and there is mere appearance of the world without any illusion of reality therein. However, since prArabdha is there, the expression of bliss is subdued. The fact of difference in expression of bliss on account of sustenance of appearance of upAdhi is not at all detrimental to absence of ignorance which is the cause of illusion of reality in the world.

It is trite to say that a jIvanmukta will feel pain when he is going through invasive surgery etc. The expression of bliss will certainly be subdued in comparison to Videha-mukta. This is obvious. It does not violate sadyomukti as the AvAraNa of avidyA is totally lost and there is no illusion of reality in perception.

BhAshya in fact holds that in order to exhaust prArabdha, the jnAnI will have rAga-dvesha etc as without them, prArabdha cannot be exhausted. यत्तूक्तं विपरीतप्रत्ययतत्कार्ययोश्च दर्शनादिति, न, तच्छेषस्थितिहेतुत्वात् — येन कर्मणा शरीरमारब्धं तत् , विपरीतप्रत्ययदोषनिमित्तत्वात् तस्य तथाभूतस्यैव विपरीतप्रत्ययदोषसंयुक्तस्य फलदाने सामर्थ्यमिति, यावत् शरीरपातः तावत्फलोपभोगाङ्गतया विपरीतप्रत्ययं रागादिदोषं च तावन्मात्रमाक्षिपत्येव — मुक्तेषुवत् प्रवृत्तफलत्वात् तद्वेतुकस्य कर्मणः । तेन न तस्य निवर्तिका विद्या, अविरोधात् ; किं तर्हि स्वाश्रयादेव स्वात्मविरोधि अविद्याकार्यं यदुत्पित्सु तन्निरुणाद्धि, अनागतत्वात् ; अतीतं हि इतरत् । Raga-dvesha are the vikshepa which subdue the expression of bliss.

Thus, there is no incongruity of Advaita-Siddhi with bhAshya here.